

LETTER TO FARMER UNIONISTS

If a rake-off in a liquor deal is grafting the State's money, what is the man doing who is false-swearing about the amount of tax he is due the State?

We often become awe-stricken over corporation of foreign graft, but have to be lambasted into paying any attention to our big army of home-made grafters—tax-dodgers—at our own door.

If it is a flagrant violation of law for the genial whiskey-drummer and dispensary men to fail to turn in just revenue and profits to the state, is it not also a crime of the same class for our genial friends in other occupations to fail to turn in to the state every dollar of taxes he is due the State according to law?

We farmers are prone to point to corporations and the business world as the great harbingers of grafters, but the plain truth is no man or class of men can point the finger of scorn at any other class and say thief-grafter!

The farmer has the same kind of human nature in his make-up that everybody else has. All the farmer has to do to rid himself of this conceit, let him take a peep at a few pages of his county Auditor's book and blush with shame at the black sheep there are within his own flock.

Why, bless you, not long since a farmer was looking over his county Auditor's books after another matter and uncovered the tax returns of another farmer who is worth more than one hundred thousand dollars, who returned his property at less than five thousand dollars!

This well-to-do farmer pays less than one hundred dollars tax while another farmer near by, who does not own one-fourth as much property, pays two hundred and twenty dollars tax. And, worse still, this well-to-do tax-dodging farmer's son is on the County Board of Equalization, while yet another son is the county clerk. Now, this may not be a conspiracy, to have one son holding down the County Board of Equalization and books that contain certain records of the securities of his father, but at the same time we are forced to say that if this ugly state of affairs is not a conspiracy, that it is at least an all-fired convenient accident or coincident to protect tax-dodgers.

Many of us know of cases where some unfortunate who owns nothing taxable save his head and heels (poll and road) has been chased for miles over the country and, finally run down and in for from \$8 to \$12 costs and the employer is compelled to put up the cash for his unfortunate laborer or tenant or his man goes to the chancery, while another well-to-do tax-dodger is just as lawfully due the State anywhere from \$50 to \$100, but is allowed to forswear and go free. Another case is the "home-builder" (the slogan for the safety of the State and nation) who pays one-third on his purchase for a home and borrows the balance and after years of toiling, under the burden of high interest, taxes and family expenses is closed out at last to satisfy the money-lender's claim, which is lawful, but the holder of these iron-clad securities had not paid a dollar taxes on these notes and mortgages during the whole time this "home pay tax, too, while the law says both interest and taxes.

Ask this money-lender why he does not pay the taxes on his securities and he will have the gall to say a whole heap about double-taxing, to compel the farmer to pay tax on borrowed money and the money-lender pay tax, too, which the law says both shall pay tax.

I am informed by a reliable source that we have in our State a corporation that has more than one and a half millions cash in its business that is paying tax on only ninety-five thousand, for the reason that one of the head officials of this corporation is on the Board of Assessors and no doubt the State has all sizes of this kind of graft in all its counties.

Are the tax laws of the State made for the plain, honest people to go by and the unscrupulous cunning to evade? Why is it that the County Auditors do not go down into this thing and place all the property on the tax books, as the law requires them to do?

There are a few among them that have the "sand" to go into the lair of the lions that guard the voters, that drive the malls down in the shingles that cover their heads! Do these floundering officers of the law think more about their salaries than they do about the good of the people or the oath they take? Why don't the Boards of Equalization do their duty and place all taxable property upon the books upon an equal basis?

Is it a fact that many of them are tarred with the same stick along with the common tax-dodgers and

the rest keep mum for fear of being called a "common knocker"? So far as placing all property on the tax books upon equal basis at its market value is concerned, the County Auditor's office is a farce and the Board of Equalization is a huge joke.

It is a stupendous fact that every one who places his property on the tax books at current or customary rates helps to pay the graft or rake-off held back by tax-dodgers, which fact should enlist the active co-operation of all law-abiding citizens, with Comptroller General Jones in his commendable crusade for tax equalization.

Publishing all tax returns in county papers every four years at re-assessment of real estate is the one fell sweep that would attract the interest and aid of the people in each township of the State. This publicity is the galling gun or bomb-shell that would drive every hider out in the open where the populace can inspect the returns and see to it that no one shall pass muster without a clean record. For the same reason that we require publishing of expenditures of the people's money, that we may see just where it goes, we should also know who is not turning in all the just tax money due the county and State.

The drag-net that would catch all the sharks that jump over and dive under the first of January as the date for property on hand, instead of naming one day, the law should take an average of several months for a basis of money on deposit or in any business.

A tax inquisitor for each Congressional district having the right to examine all public and corporation records and the power to summon witnesses to testify as to taxable property as well as the right to convene County Boards of Equalization to suit the itinerary of his rounds, would also be the one limb of the law that might be made to bring in a revenue of ten or more dollars for every dollar spent on his work on either of the plans of a salary or percentage pay. Some think that these tax inquisitors should be required to change districts in their rounds after the plan of the circuit judges.

Our law makers should keep the fact in mind that these tax-dodgers are cunning masters in this art and unless a master in the art of tax-finder is sent after them, the effort will be futile.

These tax inquisitors should not be floundering politicians or weaklings of the thirty cent calibre, but should be a selection from among the ablest men we have and paid accordingly for their work—men of spine, discretion and diplomacy, that know the law more than kith or kin, or friend or foe.

We have been moralizing over this tax-dodging graft about long enough, it is time our representatives go for these "parasites upon the body politic" with gloves off, and provide a sure plan to tighten the screws down upon all tax-dodgers alike. We have sent a Lyon out after the liquor grafters that fetched in the game and we now want a gang of Bengal tigers, that can see to go after the wily tax-dodgers. Something must be done to relieve the strain upon the consciences of our good people who are in the habit of sitting in the "amen corners" of churches singing psalms on Sunday and going before the County Auditor on Monday and swearing that the value of their cow is \$8 when they know they could get \$40 or \$50 for her, or their land is worth \$6 per acre when they know that other lands by them are selling from \$40 to \$100 per acre; or they have no other property, stocks, notes, mortgages, cash or any other property to their credit not listed in their returns and spend six months afterwards trying to relieve the strain upon their conscience by saying "they all do it" or trying to make themselves believe that false swearing is diplomacy or some other left-handed thing with no harm in it.

Most any man who has the pluck to say that plain people do the double tax paying while the cunning rich do the stunts in tax-dodging is sure to be styled as a demagogue and now is the time for each and every representative to be called upon to stand up and be counted as to whether a dollar be a dollar whether it be in the hands of the rich or poor man or in iron-clad securities, or in the active producing world. Give all a chance to say whether or not they go to Columbia to get something for the "interest they represent" that other people don't get. Is there an honest man in all South Carolina who thinks or believes that other people should pay taxes on his dollars?

J. C. Stribling,
Pendleton, S. C.
Farmers' Union Bureau.

Alfalfa and Ensilage.

A subscriber asks why if, say, thirty pounds of good field corn ensilage and ten pounds of good alfalfa hay make almost a balanced ration for a 1000-pound cow there should be any addition of grain even ever so small?

We answer that it is well to add to the above a small grain ration for two reasons: (1) Because experience shows it to be profitable. We are feeding cows for profit and if on experience we find that more or less of a grain ration is profitable the cows get it. (2) We must remember that it takes a considerable portion of this combined ensilage and alfalfa ration to support the work of grinding it and putting it into proper condition for digestion. All work of this kind that the cow does must be paid for in feed. It costs more in the economy of the cow machine to reduce roughage of any kind to a

digestive condition than it does well ground grain feed. For that and the other reason given the addition of, say, four to six pounds of a good grain ration is a profitable thing.

Something Unusual.

One of the worst of English railroad accidents happened in that country a week or two ago resulting in the loss of about thirty lives. The singular thing about this is the fact that the railroad company voluntarily assumed responsibility for the accident. It seems almost like a miracle that any large corporation or trust should take the blame to itself. Usually, it is the other way and the best legal talent is employed and every subterfuge resorted to in the effort to show that an accident is the fault of others, an act of divine providence, or something else, and that the corporation is as innocent as an infant child.

MANURING THE GARDEN.

Work That Can Be Done in Winter to Make It Productive.

Cabbage, onions and other gross feeders require more manure than such vegetables as peas or beans. Heinous droppings and hen manure are cow, but very rich, and should be put in large quantities on the plot where you expect to plant onions, cabbage or celery. Do not manure the potato patch with hen manure.

Ashes are good for the onion bed, as they are for most vegetables, if properly used, possibly being better for the grape vines and strawberries, as these plants require large amounts of potash, says a writer in Farm Progress. I have heard it said that tomatoes do not need fertilizer, but I have not found this true. Well rotted cow manure I consider the best for plants requiring warm soil, as the tomato, eggplant, okra and pepper. Peas and beans will require some manure, but less than any other vegetables. Lima beans will stand considerable fertilizing.

Stable and farm manure is better for the garden than commercial fertilizer, because it brings out a better mechanical condition of the soil, enabling it to stand both drought and excessive wet much better when it contains leaved vegetation. In case of beans or sweet potatoes, for instance, rotted straw, which contains but little elements of fertility, is ample because it is more essential to keep the soil loose and moist than to manure excessively.

I break the garden in the fall and apply manure in the winter, harrowing it in when the ground is dry in the spring. The plot where late cabbage and celery are to be grown should be manured heavily and reworked late in the spring after the weeds have started.

Every one should compost every available bit of manure. Build a rail pen in the garden, and into this throw all the ashes and trash about the place that will rot and become fertilizer. Four the wash water into it, for it has some value. The pile will be ready to scatter over the garden in the spring.

There is a place for commercial fertilizer, too, though I use it sparingly. Two hundred pounds to the acre on the strawberry bed at blooming time will work wonders in both yield, quality and color.

If your neighbor's crops are better than your own don't be too proud to discuss them with him and find out why if possible. Then strive to raise better crops.

An Effective Farm Gong.

Get a disk from an old disk plow and drive a bolt through it into the top of a post as shown in the sketch. Then bore a small hole through the handle of a hammer and fasten it with a twenty-penny nail to the post about six inches from the top. A twelve foot post set eighteen inches into the ground is about right. This gives you a first class serviceable farm gong. — Farm and Fireside.

FARM GONG.

Keeping Cabbage in Fall.

Early in December turn each head over to the north and bank the soil over the stem and base of the head, leaving merely the top exposed. Some make the mistake of turning the heads south, and the heads will be certain to get damaged, for the stem and base of the head are the most tender parts, and these will be to the north, while the morning sun will strike the open head to the south when frozen and damage it, says Progressive Farmer.

The Corn Knife.

A good corn knife makes the work of cutting corn easier. One with a strap for the wrist relieves the ache wonderfully.

The Hum of the Hive.

Economy in the use of foundation is wasteful, and it is a poor practice to put first strips or slatters of foundation in the section boxes, for it is an indisputable fact that a full sheet of foundation in each section box means not only their ready acceptance by the bees, but also the building of straighter combs.

By selection and restriction in the matter of queens we can improve our bees just as we can our stock, and there is always present in every apiary some choice queen far ahead of the others which will give us most excellent queens for requeening.

Don't keep bees unless you mean to give them the proper care and attention. If you can't do that you had better leave some one else keep the bees and buy your honey from him.

A man who knows "all about bees" and does not believe that anything more can be gained by reading bee journals, books on bees, etc., will soon be far behind the age.

The present improved system of management requires that hives should not stand too near each other. There should be at least six feet between them, and ten feet would be a preferable distance.

Be sure that your bees have a good, prolific Italian queen and the ants will not bother them.

Julian Rosenwald, a wealthy Jewish merchant of Chicago, has just announced that he will give \$25,000 to every city which will raise \$75,000 towards a Y. M. C. A. building for negroes. "Negroes," said Mr. Rosenwald in giving his first \$25,000 to a Chicago organization, "have not yet in their own ranks a sufficient number of persons whose means would enable them to establish and equip such a building, and it is, in my judgment, the duty of the white people to aid in supplying this need."

THE WEREWOLVES.

Fantastic Story of a Sixteenth Century Tragedy.

John of Nuremberg relates how a man, lost at night in a strange country, directed his steps toward a fire that he saw before him. On reaching it he found a wolf sitting enjoying its warmth and was informed by him that he was really as human as himself, but that he was compelled for a certain number of years, like all his countrymen, to assume the shape of a wolf.

A strange country, indeed, where wolves when the evenings grow chilly light a fire and in the comfort of its ruddy glow are found ready to entertain the passing traveler with their conversation!

Olaus Magnus in the early part of the sixteenth century tells us a story of a nobleman and his retinue who lost their way in journeying through a wild forest and presently found themselves hopelessly foodless and shelterless. In the urgency of their need one of the servants disclosed to him in confidence that he had the power of turning himself at will into a wolf and doubted not but that, if his master would kindly excuse him for a while, he would be able to find the party some provision. Permission being given, the man disappeared into the forest under semblance of a wolf and very quickly returned with a lamb in his mouth and then, having fulfilled his mission, resumed his human form.

In Auvergne in 1588 a nobleman in returning from the chase was stopped by a stranger, who told him that he had been furiously attacked by a savage wolf, but had been fortunate enough to save himself by slashing off one of his fore paws. This he produced as a trophy, when, to the astonishment of both, it was found to have become the delicate hand of a lady. The nobleman felt so sure that he recognized a ring upon it that he hurried to the castle and there found his wife sitting with her arm tied up, and on removing the wrappings the hand was missing. She had to stand her trial as a loup-garou and, being convicted, perished at the stake.—Hulme's "Lore and Legend."

A TURBULENT VOLCANO.

The Boiling Hot Pools of Taal, in the Philippines.

The central or main crater of Taal is nearly round. Its diameter on an air line north and south is 6,233 feet and the east-west diameter 7,546 feet. The edge of this crater is somewhat irregular, but is nowhere broken through. Its highest point standing at only 1,050 feet above sea level and its lowest at 426 feet.

Within the rim are two hot pools, known respectively as the yellow and the green lake, and a little active cone above fifty feet in height from which escape steam and sulphurous gas in varying quantities.

In the smaller lake every few minutes the water in the center is blown up like an immense bubble, which, rising above the surface, finally bursts, revealing a black orifice and causing the boiling and very turbulent water to assume all imaginable colors. The aqueous vapor escaping is sufficient to form a broad, smokelike column which is visible especially during the night and in the early morning.

At some distance and before reaching the edge of the crater, where a view of the bottom can be obtained, the rumbling sound produced by the escaping vapor, under the influence of the mysterious subterranean forces, can be heard like that of an immense boiling kettle.

The greatest eruption of Taal took place in 1754. The eruption began on May 13 and did not end till Dec. 1. During this dreadful time the intensity and aspect of the eruption were continually changing, and the four principal towns of the Laguna de Bombon disappeared—viz, Sala, Lipa, Tanauan and Taal, with the numerous villages around them.—Manila Times.

Pastor's Revenge.

In Valley Road's "Life of Pastor" we read the story of his misery. It is nothing to say that the war nearly broke his heart. "But it broke neither his faith nor the straight line of his work. Only a sort of rage possessed him to redeem and console France by working for her. 'Henceforth,' he said, 'every one of my books shall have written on it these words, 'Revenge, revenge, revenge.' And this was his revenge, to set the name of France in the honors list of science higher than ever, to give the rest of his life to her service and to wear himself out for her sake."

After a Fashion.

Reporter—Senator, if I mistake not, your name has been mentioned once or twice in connection with the presidency.

Senator Lottman—Why, yes; a London journal, I believe, once remarked that if the office of president of the United States was for sale I would probably buy it.—Chicago Tribune.

Well Guarded.

"Wuz yew guarded in yore conduct while yew wuz in town, son?" asked the old man.

"Shore thing, dad," replied the boy. "I wuz guarded by two perlickes most ev'ry th' time."—Chicago News.

Chorus Cowed the Cow.

"I thought I would introduce a real cow into my comic opera."

"How did it work?"

"Didn't work at all. The milkmaids frightened the cow."—Pittsburg Post.

Watch for opportunities. Things are best done in season.

The State says that "while towns of 5,000 inhabitants in South Carolina are complaining that the census does not reveal them to be as big as they thought themselves to be, it is of interest to consider Pelzer, a city of 5,000, we suppose, which is, by law, we believe, no city at all and quite content to be reported as part of the rural districts. Pelzer has no "municipal government" but is an excellently governed community. Many a "city" not half so big as Pelzer is uproariously about the census."

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